

## 6206.0 - Labour Force Experience, Australia, Feb 2003

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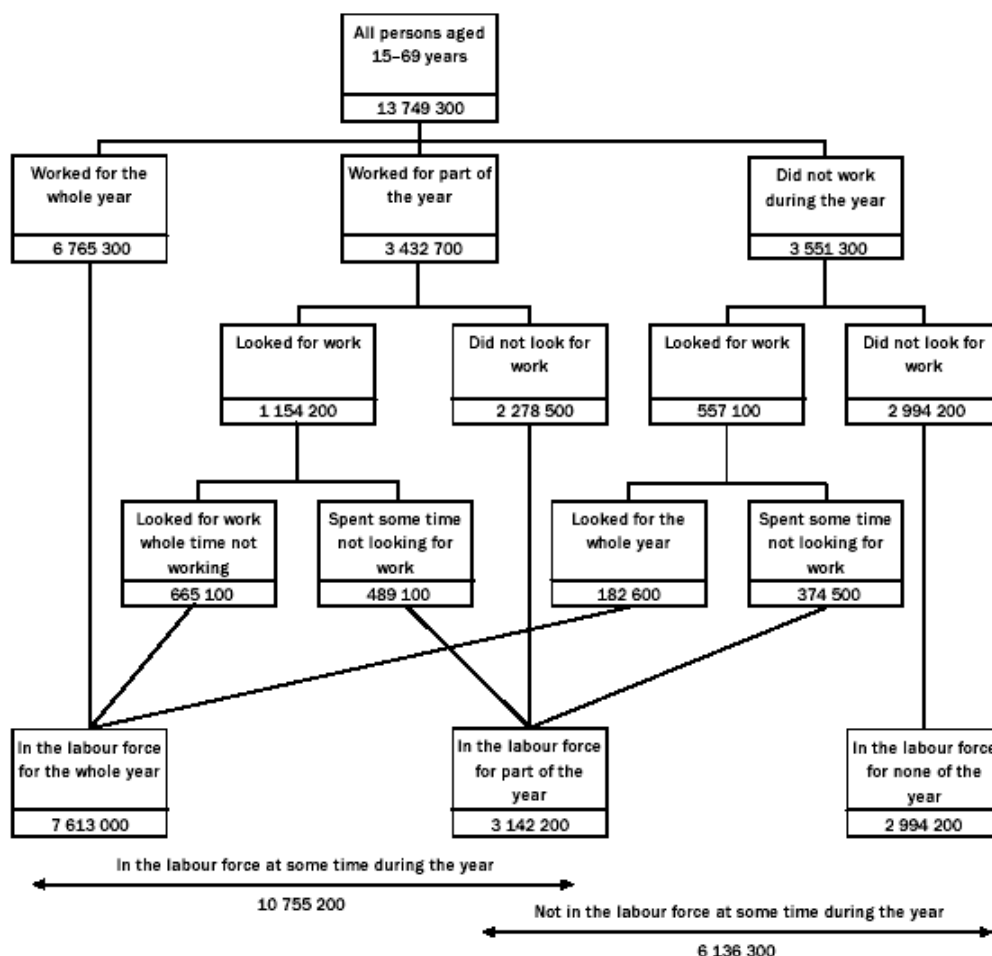
## Summary

### Main Features

#### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The following diagram illustrates the conceptual framework for the Labour Force Experience Survey. Persons aged 15-69 years were classified according to their labour force activity over a 12-month period, that is, whether they were working or looking for work.

The framework firstly differentiates between persons who worked the whole year, part of the year or did not work during the year. Persons who worked part of the year or did not work during the year were asked whether they looked for work during the year. Persons who looked for work were also asked about the time they spent looking for work.



#### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In this publication the terms worked and looked for work have been used to describe labour force activity throughout the year. Note that these terms are not the same as the more precisely defined terms employed and unemployed, which are used in the monthly Labour Force Survey to describe current labour force status.

## ALL PERSONS AGED 15 TO 69 YEARS

There were 13,749,300 civilian Australians aged 15-69 years in February 2003.

During the year ending February 2003:

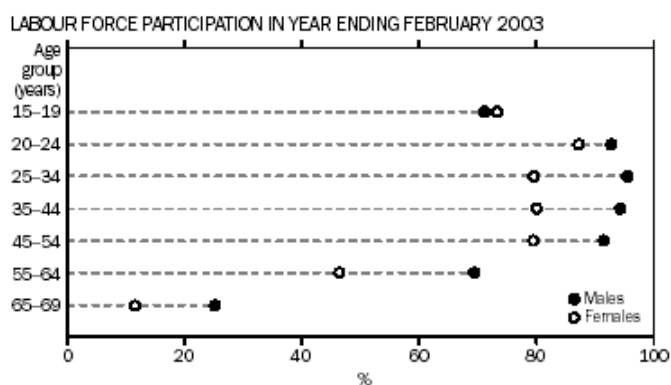
- 10,198,000 persons worked at some time during the year, of whom 6,765,300 spent the whole year working
- 1,711,400 persons looked for work at some time during the year, of whom 182,600 spent the whole year looking for work
- 6,136,300 persons were not in the labour force at some time during the year, of whom 2,994,200 spent no time in the labour force.

## Participation in the labour force

There were 10,755,200 persons aged 15-69 years in the labour force at some time during the year ending February 2003. That is, 78% of Australians aged 15-69 years either worked or looked for work at some time during the year.

Some 85% of males aged 15-69 years participated in the labour force at some time in the 12 months to February 2003. This figure has remained relatively steady since 1993. For females, the proportion participating over the same period has steadily increased from 67% in 1993 to 72% in 2003.

By age group, the highest participation in the labour force in the year ending February 2003 was for persons aged 20-24 years (90%). Labour force participation fell to 48% for persons aged 55-69 years. Males participated at higher rates than females in all age groups except for persons aged 15-19 years in which females participated at a slightly higher rate (73%) than males (71%).



The majority of people participating in the labour force spent all or most of the year in the labour force. Of the persons who were in the labour force at some time during the year, 71% spent the whole year in the labour force and 16% spent 39 to 51 weeks in the labour force.

## PERSONS WHO WORKED AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR

There were 10,198,000 persons who worked at some time during the year ending February 2003. Of these, 5,561,200 (55%) were male and 4,636,900 (45%) were female. Some 70% of these males worked for the entire 52 weeks, compared to 62% of females.

The proportion of males who worked at some time during the year (81%) has remained relatively stable since 1993. The proportion of females who worked at some time has steadily risen throughout

that period from 60% in 1993 to 68% in 2003.

Of those persons who worked at some time during the year ending February 2003:

- 79% of males and 48% of females worked full-time only
- 13% of males and 42% of females worked part-time only
- 8% of males and 10% of females worked a combination of full-time and part-time.

## PERSONS WHO LOOKED FOR WORK AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR

During the year ending February 2003, 937,800 males and 773,600 females spent some time looking for work.

The proportion of males who looked for work at some time during the year has steadily decreased, from 20% in 1993 to 14% in February 2003. Similarly, the proportion of females has decreased from 14% in 1993 to 11% for the 12 months ending February 2003.



Of the 1,711,400 persons who looked for work at some time during the year ending February 2003:

- 53% looked for work for between 1 and 12 weeks
- 28% looked for work for between 13 and 38 weeks
- 8% looked for work for between 39 and 51 weeks
- 11% looked for work for the whole year.

Two-thirds (67%) of persons looking for work during the year had also worked during the year. This proportion has not changed since 2001.

## PERSONS WHO WERE NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR

There were 6,136,300 persons who were not in the labour force at some time during the year ending February 2003. Of these, 2,472,700 were male and 3,663,600 were female. Almost half (49%) of the people in this group spent no time in the labour force during the year.

The main activities while not in the labour force most commonly reported by males were 'holiday, travel, or leisure activities' (26%), 'attended an educational institution' (25%), and 'retired or voluntarily inactive' (20%). For females, the most commonly reported main activities were 'home duties or child care' (47%) and 'attended an educational institution' (17%).

## About this Release

## ABOUT THIS RELEASE

Provides information on the labour force experience of persons aged 15-69 during the year prior to the survey. Labour force experience can be described in terms of labour force activities undertaken by persons in a 12-month period, namely working and looking for work. Details include the number of weeks spent working, looking for work, or out of the labour force during the year. Estimates can be cross-classified by labour force demographics such as state, sex, age and marital status and birthplace.

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# Explanatory Notes

## Explanatory Notes

### INTRODUCTION

**1** The statistics in this publication were compiled from data collected in the Labour Force Experience Survey conducted throughout Australia in February 2003 as a supplement to the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS). Respondents to the LFS who fell within the scope of the supplementary survey were asked further questions.

**2** The publication **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6202.0) contains information about survey design, sample redesign, scope, coverage and population benchmarks relevant to the monthly LFS, which also apply to supplementary surveys. It also contains definitions of demographic and labour force characteristics, and information about telephone interviewing which are relevant to both the monthly LFS and supplementary surveys.

**3** From April 2001 the LFS has been conducted using a redesigned questionnaire containing additional questions and some minor definitional changes. These changes also affect the supplementary surveys. For further details, see **Information Paper: Implementing the Redesigned Labour Force Survey Questionnaire** (cat. no. 6295.0) and **Information Paper: Questionnaires Used in the Labour Force Survey** (cat. no. 6232.0).

### CONCEPTS, SOURCES AND METHODS

**4** The conceptual framework used in Australia's Labour Force Survey aligns closely with the standards and guidelines set out in Resolutions of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians. Descriptions of the underlying concepts and structure of Australia's labour force statistics, and the sources and methods used in compiling these estimates, are presented in **Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods** (cat. no. 6102.0).

### SCOPE

**5** The scope of the LFS was restricted to persons aged 15 years and over and excluded the following persons:

- members of the permanent defence forces
- certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from census and estimated populations
- overseas residents in Australia
- members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependants).

**6** Students at boarding schools, patients in hospitals, residents of homes (e.g. retirement homes, homes for persons with disabilities), and inmates of prisons are excluded from all supplementary surveys.

**7** This supplementary survey was conducted in both urban and rural areas in all states and territories, but excluded approximately 120,000 persons living in very remote parts of Australia who would otherwise have been within the scope of the survey. The exclusion of these persons will have only a minor impact on any aggregate estimates that are produced for individual states and territories, except the Northern Territory where such persons account for around 20% of the population.

**8** In addition to those already excluded from the LFS, persons aged 70 years and over and visitors to private dwellings are excluded from this survey.

## COVERAGE

**9** The estimates in this publication relate to persons covered by the survey in February 2003. In the LFS, coverage rules are applied which aim to ensure that each person is associated with only one dwelling and hence has only one chance of selection in the survey. See **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6202.0) for more details.

## RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES

**10** Estimates in this publication are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors:

- Sampling error is the difference between the published estimate and the value that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey. For further information refer to the Technical Note.
- Non-sampling errors are inaccuracies that occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents and interviewers, and errors made in coding and processing data. These inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or a sample. Every effort is made to reduce the non-sampling error to a minimum by careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers and efficient processing procedures.

## SEASONAL FACTORS

**11** The estimates are based on information collected in the survey month and, due to seasonal factors, may not be representative of other months of the year.

## CLASSIFICATIONS USED

**12** Occupation data are classified according to the **ASCO - Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, Second Edition** (cat. no. 1220.0).

**13** Industry data are classified according to the **Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC), 1993** (cat. no. 1292.0).

**14** Country of birth data are classified according to the **Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC), 1998** (cat. no. 1269.0).

**15** In 2001, the **ABS Classification of Qualifications (ABSCQ)** (cat. no. 1262.0) was replaced by the **Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED)** (cat. no. 1272.0). The ASCED is a national standard classification which can be applied to all sectors of the Australian education system including schools, vocational education and training and higher education. ASCED replaces a number of classifications previously used in administrative and statistical systems, including the ABSCQ. The ASCED comprises two classifications: Level of Education and Field of Education. See **Appendix 1** for further information.

## NOTES ABOUT THE ESTIMATES

**16** A number of changes have occurred since the 2001 survey.

### **Time worked with current employer/business**

**17** With the introduction of the new Labour Force Survey questionnaire in April 2001, 'time worked with current employer/business' is now collected in units of months for most persons who had been with their current employer/business for less than 12 months. Previously, this information was collected in units of weeks for all of those who had been with their current employer/business for less than 12 months. As a result, the data item is now available in units of months where it was previously available in weeks.

### **Number of employers/businesses during the year**

**18** The data item 'number of employers/businesses during the year' has been derived differently from previous surveys. Prior to 2003, where they could be identified, multiple jobs of multiple job-holders were excluded from this data item. For 2003, all employers/businesses held by all persons are now included. As a result of this change, the data item 'whether ceased a job during the year', which was based on the derivation of 'number of employers/businesses during the year', is not available for 2003.

### **Implementation of ASCED**

**19** Data items relating to educational attainment have been affected by the implementation of the **Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED)**. Time series comparisons are available in an aggregated format as presented in tables 6, 7 and 9. Data for 2003, classified according to ASCED, are available at a more detailed level for level of highest non-school qualification, level of highest educational attainment and highest year of school completed. See Appendix 1 for more information on ASCED.

### **COMPARABILITY OF TIME SERIES**

**20** Revisions are made to population benchmarks for the LFS after each five-yearly Census of Population and Housing. The last such revision was made in February 1999 to take account of the results of the 1996 Census of Population and Housing. Estimates from supplementary surveys conducted from and including February 1999 are therefore based on these revised population benchmarks.

**21** Supplementary surveys are not always conducted on the full LFS sample. Since August 1994 the sample for supplementary surveys has been restricted to no more than seven-eighths of the LFS sample. Therefore the reduction in sample size means that the standard errors for this survey differ from those applicable to surveys conducted prior to August 1994.

### **COMPARABILITY WITH MONTHLY LFS STATISTICS**

**22** Due to differences in the scope and sample size of this supplementary survey and that of the LFS, the estimation procedure may lead to some small variations between labour force estimates from this survey and those from the LFS.

### **PREVIOUS SURVEYS**

**23** Results of similar surveys, conducted in February 1969, 1973, 1975, 1976, 1977, annually from February 1979 to February 1989, annually from March 1990 to March 1994, and in February 1995, 1997, 1999 and 2001 have been given in previous issues of the publication **Labour Force Experience, Australia** (cat. no. 6206.0) and the Standard Data Service **Labour Force Experience on Hardcopy, Australia** (cat. no. 6206.0.40.001).

### **NEXT SURVEY**

**24** The ABS plans to conduct this survey again in February 2005.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

**25** ABS surveys draw extensively on information provided freely by individuals, businesses, governments and other organisations. Their continued cooperation is very much appreciated: without it, the wide range of statistics published by the ABS would not be available. Information received by the ABS is treated in strict confidence as required by the **Census and Statistics Act 1905**.

## RELATED PUBLICATIONS

**26** Other publications which may be of interest include:

- **Career Experience, Australia**, cat. no. 6254.0
- **Job Search Experience, Australia**, cat. no. 6222.0
- **Labour Force, Australia**, cat. no. 6202.0
- **Labour Mobility, Australia**, cat. no. 6209.0
- **Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods**, cat. no. 6102.0
- **Persons Not in the Labour Force, Australia**, cat. no. 6220.0

**27** Current publications and other products released by the ABS are listed in the **Catalogue of Publications and Products** (cat. no. 1101.0). The Catalogue is available from any ABS office. The ABS also issues a daily **Release Advice** on the web site which details products to be released in the week ahead.

## Glossary

### Advanced diploma/Diploma or below

Advanced diploma/Diploma or below includes qualifications at the Advanced Diploma and Diploma Level, and Certificates I, II, III and IV levels.

### Bachelor degree or above

Bachelor degree or above includes qualifications at the Post graduate degree Level, Graduate diploma and graduate certificate Level and Bachelor degree Level.

### Employed

All persons aged 15 years and over who, during the reference week:

- worked for one hour or more for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind in a job or business, or on a farm (comprising employees, employers and own account workers); or
- worked for one hour or more without pay in a family business or on a farm (i.e. contributing family workers); or
- were employees who had a job but were not at work and were:
  - away from work for less than four weeks up to the end of the reference week; or
  - away from work for more than four weeks up to the end of the reference week and received pay for some or all of the four week period to the end of the reference week; or
  - away from work as a standard work or shift arrangement; or
  - on strike or locked out; or

- on workers' compensation and expected to return to their job; or
- were employers or own account workers, who had a job, business or farm, but were not at work.

## **Family**

Two or more related persons, one of whom is at least 15 years of age, who are related by blood, marriage (registered or de facto), adoption, step or fostering; and who are usually resident in the same household. The basis of a family is formed by identifying the presence of a couple relationship, lone parent-child relationship or other blood relationship. Some households will therefore contain more than one family. Further details on the determination of family relationships are given in **Australian Labour Market Statistics** (cat. no. 6105.0).

## **Full-time status of weeks worked during the year**

Any weeks of the year that a person perceived that they had worked full-time.

## **In the labour force at some time during the year**

Persons who had worked or looked for work for one week or more during the year.

## **In the labour force for the whole year**

Persons who had either worked or looked for work every week for the whole year.

## **In the labour force for part of the year**

Persons who had either worked or looked for work for one week or more during the year, but had some weeks when neither activity was undertaken.

## **Level of highest educational attainment**

Level of highest educational attainment identifies the highest achievement a person has attained in any area of study. It is defined as the highest educational attainment a person has achieved, and is not a measurement of relative importance of different fields of study.

Higher levels of education are typically characterised by the greater significance of theoretical learning and greater complexity of factual and practical learning. It is derived from a person's highest year of school completed and level of highest non-school educational qualification. The highest qualification completed by the respondent is classified according to the **Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED)** (cat. no. 1272.0). See Appendix 1 for further information.

## **Level of highest non-school qualification**

Non-school qualifications are awarded for educational attainments other than those of pre-primary, primary or secondary education. They include qualifications at the Post Graduate Degree Level, Master Degree Level, Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate Level, Bachelor Degree Level, Advanced Diploma and Diploma Level, and Certificates I, II, III and IV levels. Non-school qualifications may be attained concurrently with school qualifications.

In this publication, prior to 2003 those who were still at school were not asked their level of highest non-school qualification.

## **Looked for work at some time during the year**

Persons who looked for work for one week or more during the year.

## **Main English-speaking countries**

Main English-speaking countries are the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, South Africa, the United



States of America and New Zealand.

### **Mean duration of time spent looking for work**

Obtained by dividing the aggregate number of weeks a group has been looking for work by the number of persons in that group.

### **Median duration of time spent looking for work**

The duration which divides persons who looked for work into two equal groups, one comprising persons whose time spent looking for work during the year is above the median, and the other, persons whose time spent looking is below it.

### **Multiple job-holders**

Employed persons who worked in two or more jobs or held multiple jobs from which they were absent because of holidays, sickness or any other reason. Multiple job-holders exclude those who changed employer.

### **Not in the labour force at some time during the year**

Persons who had neither worked nor looked for work for one week or more during the year.

### **Number of employers/businesses during the year**

The number of employers/businesses a person worked for during the year.

### **Number of spells of looking for work during the year**

The number of different periods, including the current period, during which a person was not working but was looking for a job.

### **Part-time status of weeks worked during the year**

Any weeks of the year that a person perceived they had worked part-time.

### **Time in the labour force during the year**

The total number of weeks a person reported as having either worked or looked for work.

### **Time not in the labour force during the year**

The total number of weeks a person reported as having neither worked nor looked for work.

### **Time spent looking for work during the year**

The total number of weeks a person spent looking for work, while not working.

### **Time worked during the year**

The total number of weeks a person reported as having either worked or been on paid leave. Periods of one week or more on strike or time off without pay are not classified as time worked.

### **Unemployed**

Persons aged 15 years and over who were not employed during the reference week, and:

- had actively looked for full-time or part-time work at any time in the four weeks up to the end of the reference week and:
  - were available for work in the reference week; or

- were waiting to start a new job within four weeks from the end of the reference week and could have started in the reference week if the job had been available then.

## Worked

Activity in a job, business or farm, for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind; or any activity in a family business that contributed to the operation of that business although no payment was received. Includes being absent, but on paid leave, from such activity.

## Worked at some time during the year

Persons who reported having worked and/or been on paid leave for one week or more during the year.

## Worked for part of the year

Persons who reported having worked and/or been on paid leave for part of the year.

## Back to Main Features

# Abbreviations

## The following abbreviations have been used in this publication

'000 thousand  
 ABS Australian Bureau of Statistics  
 ABSCQ Australian Bureau of Statistics Classification of Qualifications  
 ANZSIC Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification  
 ASCED Australian Standard Classification of Education  
 ASCO Australian Standard Classification of Occupations  
 LFS Labour Force Survey  
 n.e.c. not elsewhere classified  
 RSE relative standard error  
 SACC Standard Australian Classification of Countries  
 SE standard error

# Appendix

## CLASSIFICATION OF EDUCATION

In 2001, the **ABS Classification of Qualifications (ABSCQ)** (cat. no. 1262.0) was replaced by the **Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED)** (cat. no. 1272.0). The ASCED is a national standard classification which can be applied to all sectors of the Australian education system including schools, vocational education and training and higher education. ASCED replaces a number of classifications previously used in administrative and statistical systems, including the ABSCQ. The ASCED comprises two classifications: Level of Education and Field of Education.

Level of Highest Educational Attainment can be derived from information on Highest Year of School Completed and Level of Highest Non-school Qualification. The derivation process determines which of the 'non-school' or 'school' attainments will be regarded as the highest. Usually the higher ranking attainment will be self-evident, but in some cases some Secondary Education is regarded, for the purposes of obtaining a single measure, as higher than some Certificate level attainments.

The following decision table is used to determine which of the responses to questions on Highest Year

of School Completed (coded to ASCED Broad Level 6) and Level of Highest Non-school Qualification (coded to ASCED Broad Level 5) will be regarded as the highest. It is emphasised that this table was designed for the purpose of obtaining a single value for the output variable Level of Highest Educational Attainment and is not intended to convey any other ordinality.

**DECISION TABLE: ASCED LEVEL OF EDUCATION**

	<b>Certificate not further defined (500)</b>	<b>Certificate III or IV not further defined (510)</b>	<b>Certificate IV (511)</b>	<b>Certificate III (514)</b>	<b>Certificate I or II not further defined (520)</b>	<b>Certificate II (521)</b>	<b>Certificate I (524)</b>
<b>Secondary Education not further defined (600)</b>	Certificate not further defined	Certificate III or IV not further defined	Certificate IV	Certificate III	Certificate II or I not further defined	Certificate II	Certificate I
<b>Senior Secondary Education not further defined (610)</b>	Senior Secondary not further defined	Certificate III or IV not further defined	Certificate IV	Certificate III	Senior Secondary not further defined	Senior Secondary not further defined	Senior Secondary not further defined
<b>Year 12 (612)</b>	Year 12	Certificate III or IV not further defined	Certificate IV	Certificate III	Year 12	Year 12	Year 12
<b>Year 11 (613)</b>	Year 11	Certificate III or IV not further defined	Certificate IV	Certificate III	Year 11	Year 11	Year 11
<b>Junior Secondary Education not further defined (620)</b>	Certificate not further defined	Certificate III or IV not further defined	Certificate IV	Certificate III	Certificate I or II not further defined	Certificate II	Certificate I
<b>Year 10 (621)</b>	Year 10	Certificate III or IV not further defined	Certificate IV	Certificate III	Year 10	Certificate II	Year 10
<b>Year 9 (622)</b>	Certificate not further defined	Certificate III or IV not further defined	Certificate IV	Certificate III	Certificate I or II not further defined	Certificate II	Certificate I
<b>Year 8 (623)</b>	Certificate not further defined	Certificate III or IV not further defined	Certificate IV	Certificate III	Certificate I or II not further defined	Certificate II	Certificate I
<b>Year 7 (624)</b>	Certificate not further defined	Certificate III or IV not further defined	Certificate IV	Certificate III	Certificate I or II not further defined	Certificate II	Certificate I

The decision table is also used to rank the information provided in a survey about the qualifications and attainments of a single individual. It does not represent any basis for comparison between differing qualifications. For example, a person whose Highest Year of School Completed was Year 12, and

whose Level of Highest Non-school Qualification was a Certificate III, would have those responses crosschecked on the decision table and would as a result have their Level of Highest Educational Attainment output as Certificate III. However, if the same person answered 'Certificate' to the highest non-school qualification question, without offering any further detail, it would be crosschecked against Year 12 on the decision table as 'Certificate not further defined'. The output would then be 'Year 12'. The decision table, therefore, does not necessarily imply that one qualification is 'higher' than the other.

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